

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SS-15 NSC-10 EB-11 OMB-01 TRSE-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 152948

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, BG, PK

SUBJECT: TAJUDDIN'S CALL ON THE SECRETARY

1. BD MINISTER OF FINANCE AND JUTE TAJUDDIN AHMED HELD HALF HOUR MEETING AUGUST 1 WITH SECRETARY. TAJUDDIN ACCOMPANIED BY PRIVATE SECRETARY CHOWDHURY, AND MUHITH AND A.K. CHOWDHURY OF BD EMBASSY. CONSTABLE, NEA/PAB, SAT IN. CONVERSATION HELD IN CORDIAL AND FRANK ATMOSPHERE THROUGHOUT.

2. AFTER WELCOMING TAJUDDIN, SECRETARY NOTED HIS PLEASURE THAT RELATIONS ARE GOOD BETWEEN US AND BD. SECRETARY SAID THAT OUR POLICY IS TO BE HELPFUL TO BD WITHOUT INTRUDING INTO INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF BD OR INTO CONFIDENTIAL

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BD'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. WITHOUT SEEKING

TO OFFER ADVICE, WE NEVERTHELESS HOPE THAT BDG AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS OF SOUTH ASIA CAN WORK OUT SOLUTIONS TO THEIR PROBLEMS. SECRETARY ALSO INDICATED OUR HOPE THAT PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH CAN WORK OUT THE PROBLEM OF THEIR DEBT DIVISION IN WHICH U.S. HAS AN INTEREST. SECRETARY NOTED THAT CHARGES HAVE BEEN RAISED OF U.S. EFFORT TO CREATE DIVISIONS BETWEEN BD AND INDIA. SECRETARY CHARACTERIZED THESE CHARGES AS ABSURD AND ASSURED TAJUDDIN THAT U.S. UNDERSTOOD NECESSITY OF CLOSE INDIA-BD RELATIONS AND THAT INDIA'S CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN ASSISTANCE TO BD APPRECIATED HERE.

3. EXPLORING FURTHER WITH TAJUDDIN QUESTION OF SOUTH ASIA POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, SECRETARY ASKED ABOUT BD POSITION ON PROPOSED WAR CRIMES TRIALS OF 195 PAKISTANI POW'S. TAJUDDIN SAID BD MOTIVATED NOT BY DESIRE FOR VENGEANCE BUT DESIRE TO SHOW ATROCITIES TO WORLD SO THEY WOULD NOT RECUR. SECRETARY OBSERVED THAT WHILE BDG FEELINGS ON TRIALS QUESTION UNDERSTANDABLE, THE PREVENTIVE EFFECT OF WAR CRIMES TRIALS WAS QUESTIONABLE.

HE ALSO NOTED FACT THAT PRESIDENT GOWON IN AFTERMATH OF NIGERIAN CIVIL WAR HAD HELD NO TRIALS, IN SPITE OF EVIDENCE OF WIDESPREAD ATROCITIES THERE, BUT HAD PROCEEDED DIRECTLY TO CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY OF RECONCILIATION. ALTHOUGH HE REPEATED NEED FOR TRIALS, TAJUDDIN ACKNOWLEDGED FORCE OF SECRETARY'S ARGUMENT THAT WAR CRIMES TRIALS UNLIKELY TO HAVE DETERRENT EFFECT ON COMMISSION OF ATROCITIES IN FUTURE. FYI: THIS PORTION OF CONVERSATION CARRIED ON IN FORTHRIGHT BUT RELAXED MANNER. TAJUDDIN'S REACTION TO SECRETARY'S LOW-KEY APPROACH ON TRIALS REFLECTED APPARENT UNDERSTANDING OF SPIRIT IN WHICH SECRETARY'S REMARKS MADE. END FYI.

4. TAJUDDIN REPLIED TO SECRETARY'S OPENING REMARKS WITH WARM EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE OF BDG AND BENGALEE PEOPLE FOR U.S. ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT DURING DIFFICULT PERIOD. NOTED THAT RELATIONS WITH USG NOW GOOD AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THEY WILL BE FURTHER STRENGTHENED. CONFIDENTIAL

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TAJUDDIN DESCRIBED HIS EARLIER TALKS WITH SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE BUTZ IN WHICH MINISTER MADE APPEAL FOR ADDITIONAL COMMITMENT OF 300,000 TONS OF PL 480 WHEAT FOR DELIVERY BEFORE AMAN HARVEST IN NOVEMBER-DECEMBER. TAJUDDIN DESCRIBED LATTER TWO MONTHS AS CRITICAL PERIOD FOR WHICH BDG HAS NO DELIVERIES COMMITTED FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. ON POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS OF SOUTH ASIA, TAJUDDIN SAID BD ANXIOUS FOR SETTLEMENT,

REDUCTION OF TENSIONS, AND ENSUING OPPORTUNITY TO
DEDICATE ITSELF EXCLUSIVELY TO DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM.

5. SECRETARY NOTED SCOPE OF FOOD ASSISTANCE WE HAVE
PROVIDED IN RECENT PAST TO BANGLADESH AND REITERATED USG
DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL IN FUTURE WITHIN LIMITS IMPOSED BY
AVAILABILITIES OF SURPLUS STOCKS. LOOKING AHEAD TO LONGER
TERM, SECRETARY SPOKE OF NEED FOR FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES
TO WORK HARDER TO ACHIEVE SELF-SUFFICIENCY. SECRETARY
SAID THAT WHILE OTHERS OFTEN ATTRIBUTED AMERICAN AGRI-
CULTURAL SUCCESS TO NATURAL ENDOWMENTS, THEY OVERLOOKED
ESSENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF SYSTEM THAT RELEASED PRODUCTIVE
ENERGIES. TAJUDDIN ACKNOWLEDGED IMPORTANCE OF HARD WORK

AND USE OF NEW TECHNIQUES FOR AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT
AND SAID BANGLADESH AIMED FOR SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN FOOD
IN THREE YEARS, BARRING UNFORESEEN NATURAL DISASTERS.
ROGERS

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